

Draft Meeting Minutes

Frederick County Sustainability Commission

Wednesday March 16, 2011

3:00 pm

Third Floor Meeting Room, Winchester Hall, 12 E. Church Street, Frederick, MD

Present: Don Briggs, Fred Ugast, Annmarie Creamer, Lisa Gaver, Mark Lancaster, Margie Lance, Catherine McCalip-Thompson, Rich Maranto, Winnie Palmer, and Janice Wiles.

Other attendees: Kelli Goetz, Tyler Harshman, Lisa Orr, and Hilari Varnadore (staff); Sean McGuire, Brad Gottschall, Kibby Powell, Lindsay Carroll, David Haller, Chris May, Richard Jeffries, Charles Marohn, Debbie Kalish, Gina Posey, Sean McTamany, John Clarke, Monika Lucey, Dana French, Emilee von Nordon, Elliss Burruss, and Caroline Eader.

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Chairman Don Briggs called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

2. Administrative Items

Fred Ugast moved to accept the meeting minutes as presented; Janice Wiles seconded and all voted in favor (Vote: 10-0-3).

3. Commission Member Comments

Members provided brief updates in regard to a planned off shore wind rally, MD septic system legislative proposal, energy literacy program at the National Academy of Sciences, BG&E Smart Meter program, and recent green business announcement from Musket Ridge.

4. Maryland's Genuine Progress Indicators Project

Sean McGuire of the state's Dept. of Natural Resources, Office for Sustainable Futures gave a presentation on Maryland's Genuine Progress Indictors project – or GPI. The GPI takes into account 26 values – economic, environmental and social – to measure how our economic progress impacts long-term prosperity. Mr. McGuire walked the commission through the GPI web site, <http://www.green.maryland.gov/mdgpi/>, to familiarize everyone with the data and resources available.

5. Connecting with Strong Towns USA

Mr. Charles Marohn of Strong Towns USA in Minnesota was in town for several other local and regional presentations was able to share with the commission his thoughts on the four primary mechanisms that have fueled the current growth pattern within our towns and neighborhoods. His 4 mechanisms of growth are: transfer payments between governments; demand-driven transportation spending; debt, both public and private; and the Growth Ponzi Scheme. Mr. Marohn's work can be reviewed at <http://www.strongtowns.org/mechanisms-of-growth/>.

6. Sustainability Commission Work Plan Updates

Ag & Food: Lisa Gaver stated that the estate tax amendments have about a 50/50 chance with the Legislature. She made brief comments about protecting the Master Gardener program and other extension office services. She also noted the impact the septic bill could have on small farms.

Outreach & Education: There was a discussion in regard to recognizing and potentially awarding sustainability leaders/businesses in the county. The Red Horse, The Common Market, and others were exemplifying green business practices. Fred Ugast made a motion to provide a letter of recognition to the two before mentioned businesses and initiate a committee to think further about recognition and awards for local Frederick County sustainability leaders and green businesses. Margie Lance seconded the motion. There was significant discussion on the topic. Members thought a process needed to be established, with criteria, to ensure recognition was given where it is deserved. It was noted that the commission could follow a maturity model starting with a basic letter, developing formal criteria and metrics, then producing an awards program for formal recognition. A voted on the original motion carried (Vote: 8-1-4).

As part of the work plan discussion, various legislative issues were addressed. Members questioned whether the commission should establish a legislative committee for the next fiscal year to at least provide some structure for these discussions/debates. Additionally, Chairman Briggs noted that the way legislative issues were currently being handled was not providing a timely process for adequate review of the issues, discussion, and a vote prior to submitting comment. Catherine McKalip-Thompson reviewed the commission's charge in its Resolution and could not find a direct tie in to legislative issues. She thought that it was a distraction to the commission's duties. Rich Maranto asked that the item be added to the April agenda for further discussion.

7. Public Comments

Brad Gottschall from Fort Detrick noted that the Sustainability Working Meeting for Frederick County leaders in sustainability was scheduled for May 2nd on base.

8. Adjourn

Fred Ugast made a motion to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Janice Wiles. All voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Hilari Varnadore